(d) Does not arise.

(e) The litigation was initiated by M/s Zaivvalla & Co. who refused to accept all reasonabl; offers made for an out-of-Court settlement. As a result, there was no option available to the Government except to proceed with the litigation. As such, the question of negligence does not arise.

Issues discussed by Indian and Thai PMs

1069. SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI : DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSH1 :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) what specific bilateral matters were discussed with the Thai Prime Minister during his recent visit to Thailand;

(b) what are the points on which agreement has been reached; and

(c) what steps are being taken to implement the proposals agreed to by both the Governments ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA) : (a) to (c) During the recent visit to Thailand, the Prime Minister discussed with the Prime Minister of Thailand various issues of common concern to both countries. In particular, discussions were held on bilateral relations in various fields, such as trade, economic, investment, educational, tourism, cultural, technical and scientific cooperation, as well as people-to-people contacts.

The two Prime Ministers agreed that India and Thailand should maintain close contacts and exchanges for continued cooperation. It was decided. to draw up a time bound action programme for cooperation in specific projects which would be evaluated and expanded after one year. The private sector is expected to play its role in increasing trade and investment both ways. The PM of Thailand accepted the invitation to visit India.

The two sides also took note of the growing menace of drug-trafficking and crossborder terrorism. Recognising that international terrorism in all its manifestations is of common concern to all nations, the two sides reiterated their resolve to combat terrorism in all its forms. Both sides also agreed to maintain and strengthen their cooperation in combating drug-trafficking and its nexus with terrorism.

Pending Applications for Passports in Chandigarh and Jalandhar

1070. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA; Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) how many applications for passports are lying pending in the Passport Office in Chandigarh and Jalandhar and for how long;

(b) whether it is a fact that people have to wait for more than a year to get their passports in the normal course which cause them great hardship and inconvenience.

(c) whether an eight point guidelines has been issued by the Ministry for issuing out of turn passports and if so, what are these guidelines;

(d) whether applicants waiting for more than eight months for their passports have also to approach for out of turn passport, whereas in other countries passports are issued within a week;